

MEMORIAL

OF THE

CITY COUNCIL OF CHARLESTON, S. CAROLINA,

PRAYING THAT

A MARINE HOSPITAL

BE ERECTED AT THAT PORT FOR

ACCOMMODATION OF SICK AND DISABLED SEAMEN, &c.

JANUARY 18, 1826.

Referred to the Committee on Commerce.

DECEMBER 20, 1826.

Referred to the Committee on Commerce.

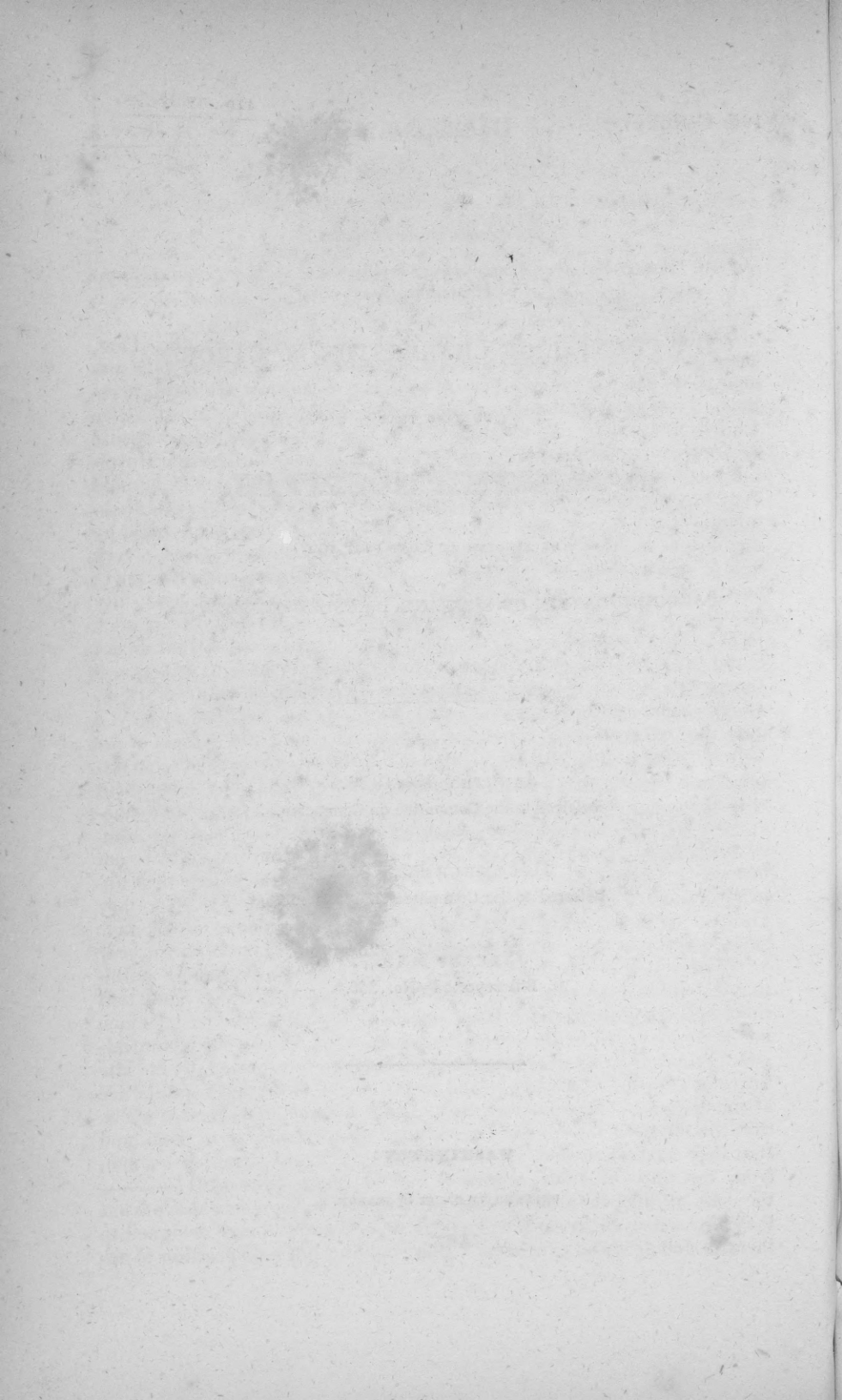
JANUARY 9, 1827.

Bill reported—No. 356.

WASHINGTON :

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1827.



To the Honorable the President and Members of the Senate of the United States :

The Memorial of the City Council of Charleston, sheweth : That, sometime in the year one thousand eight hundred and four, your memorialists entered into a contract with Mr. Secretary Gallatin, to relieve the United States from the charge of the Marine Hospital, in Charleston, stipulating that the sum of fifteen thousand dollars should be forthwith appropriated by the United States for building a Hospital, and that the hospital money collected in this port should be paid over to your memorialists, to defray the expenses of the establishment. That it was well understood, and had, indeed, been found by the officers of the United States, that the hospital money was a very inadequate fund for the relief of sick and disabled seamen in this port ; but it was agreed, that the deficiency should be made up by a duty on tonnage, and that the consent of Congress should be asked to such an act of the Legislature. Your memorialists further shew, that an act of the Legislature was afterwards passed, and the consent of Congress thereto was given, by an act approved on the 28th of March, 1806, so far as the same extends, to authorize your memorialists to levy a duty not exceeding six cents per ton, on all ships and vessels of the United States, which shall arrive and be entered in the port of Charleston, from any foreign port or place whatever. That, by subsequent acts of Congress, this regulation has been continued, and your memorialists are authorized to lay a duty on such vessels as above mentioned, not exceeding ten cents per ton. But your memorialists have not had the benefit of their contract, so far as relates to the money to be appropriated for building a Hospital ; and, although the late Mr. Secretary Dallas was so much convinced of the right of your memorialists, as to cause a suitable spot for a Marine Hospital to be purchased in the year 1816, and to hold out to your memorialists assurances that the buildings should be erected with as little delay as possible ; yet, since that time, nothing more has been done by the United States, and the lot which has been conveyed to them remains unimproved. And your memorialists, in answer to their remonstrances, have been informed, by the late Secretary of the Treasury, that no means for building hospitals are at the disposal of that Department. Your memorialists further shew, that the terms of the contract are altogether unfavorable to them, and that they have expended, in the support of sick and disabled seamen, from the date of their contract, in the year 1804, till ———, the sum of fifty thousand dollars and upwards, over and above what they have received from the hospital money and tonnage assigned to them to defray those expenses. That nothing but a disposition to ac-

commodate the General Government could have led them to agree to the present arrangement ; for, in comparison with the great mercantile cities of the Union, Charleston has few seamen of her own, but the climate is so unfavorable to strangers, that the number of sick and disabled seamen from the Northern States, to be relieved in this city, is very great, and her commerce is such that neither the hospital money, nor the tonnage which she is allowed to levy, can be demanded from those vessels which generally visit this port ; because the goods which come to this market are chiefly imported through the Northern cities. Yet, however unequal the contract may be, and disadvantageous to your memorialists, their claim is only urged on the ground that they have not had the benefit of its provisions. For it was agreed that a hospital should be built with the funds of the United States, and that the sum of fifteen thousand dollars should be laid out for that purpose. But no hospital has been built, and no part of this money appropriated. Your memorialists would willingly rescind the contract altogether, and resign those branches of revenue which have been assigned to them, if the United States will take the Marine Hospital into their own hands. But, if the Government should decline to do so, your memorialists rely on the justice of Congress to execute the agreement fully, and appropriate a sufficient sum for building a Marine Hospital for sick and disabled seamen in this port. And, inasmuch as your memorialists, for twenty-one years, have waited for this appropriation, and have provided a temporary building at their own expense, they claim the interest on the sum of fifteen thousand dollars, from the year one thousand eight hundred and four, to this time. But they are willing that the principal and interest should be laid out in erecting a Marine Hospital ; as they believe that the whole amount may be very usefully employed for that purpose.

JOS. JOHNSON, *Intendant.*